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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

VISIT TO WORTHING.

As already announced there will be a visit to **Worthing** on **Wednesday, July 3rd**. The party will travel by Restall's excursion train—12.25 from Victoria to **Brighton**, and proceed from there by motor-omnibus or rail to Worthing. Restall's return fare to Brighton is 2s. 6d. if tickets are purchased before the day and 6d. more if purchased on the day; the motor-omnibus fare will be 1s. each way, and if the party is sufficiently large a private vehicle can be arranged for; return train fare—Brighton to Worthing—is 1s. 8d.

Miss Marion Frost, Borough Librarian of Worthing, has very kindly invited the visitors to inspect the Library, and afterwards to take tea with her; she hopes librarians as well as assistants will accept her invitation. The reason for not proceeding direct to Worthing is that there are no reduced fares of which advantage can be taken, and the route proposed is the cheapest possible. The omnibus road from Brighton to Worthing is by the sea nearly all the way, and an enjoyable hour's ride is assured if the weather is anything like favourable. It is expected that several of the Brighton Library staff will join the party. The outing will be an entirely social one—just a pleasant half-day's break from the ordinary daily routine, and it is hoped that all who possibly can will be present. It will be necessary for those intending to be present to notify Mr. W. B. Thorne, Public Library, Bromley-by-Bow, E., by post-card at once.

LIBRARY ASSOCIATION EXAMINATIONS.

Section I.: Literary History: Result.

Honours:

Miss Dorothy Ballen, British Library of Political Science.

Merit:

Miss Phyllis E. Dixon, Manchester; Miss Ruby W. Hall, Finsbury Public Library.

Pass:

Miss Ruth Blackwell, Cirencester; W. T. Carter, Warwick P.L.; A. H. Gillgrass, Hull P.L.; Edgar Osborne, Bournemouth P.L.; A. H. Pennington, Birmingham; F. W. C. Pepper, Bolton P.L.; Charles Sexton, Cardiff P.L.; Henry A. Sharp, Fulham P.L.

NATIONAL INSURANCE ACT.

Before becoming insured under the Act, Public Library Assistants are advised to write to the Secretary of the National Association of Local Government Officers, 24, Bloomsbury Square, W.C., for particulars of the Nalgo approved society.

WASTE IN THE LIBRARY FIELD.*

By L. STANLEY JAST, Chief Librarian, Croydon Public Libraries; Honorary Secretary of the Library Association.

I cannot I think show my appreciation of the honour you have conferred upon me by asking me to deliver this address, at your Seventeenth Annual Meeting, better than by choosing a subject for it of living interest and of immediate importance. And you will naturally expect that as a librarian, with no claim to be considered as of the slightest consequence in any other department of activity, I should take for my theme a professional subject, one closely connected with the work in which we are daily engaged. The two marks I have mentioned, namely, living interest, immediate importance, indubitably characterise the topic I am going to deal with, whatever may be said of the treatment I am able to give it. It is not a new subject—few subjects of any consequence are—and it is a subject about which a great deal has been written—which generally means a subject about which most things of importance have still to be said. I have called it "Waste in the Library Field." I recognise that the term "Waste" is apt to be used very carelessly. When nature scatters a thousand seeds to ensure that one shall come to maturity, that is not waste—the seeds that have failed to eventuate have done their part in the scheme of things by ensuring the fruition of the one—on such sacrifice the world is builded. But when some

*An Address before the Annual Meeting of the Library Assistants' Association at University College, Gower Street, W.C., June 12th, 1912.

five hundred librarians, scattered over the country, all sit down to catalogue the same particulars of the same book, I call that waste. And waste of this kind is going on, as we know, all over the library field in this country. Work is being done independently by some five hundred librarians—to consider only the municipal public libraries—which might be done by two or three persons far more efficiently in a Central Office—not to speak of the immense saving of course in both time and money which would result therefrom. If ever there was a case for some sort of co-operative effort this is one, and it is in the hope that you may be able in the day of your power to advance to achievement, when we—your predecessors—have only succeeded in marking time, that I submit this question to your notice.

Of course there are difficulties, but these difficulties are much less serious than might be supposed. Or rather—to apply a very true remark made by a character in one of Bernard Shaw's plays—the real difficulty in bringing about the realisation of any scheme for a Central Cataloguing Bureau will be found to lie in some quite unimportant consideration of no intrinsic consequence whatever. Schemes seldom come to grief over real difficulties; they often come to grief over imaginary ones. I have been assured by a language expert that the main difficulty for many foreigners in learning English is to get them to realise the comparative absence of any grammar of the language, and it may very well be that the main obstacle to carrying out a scheme of centralised cataloguing will be the absence of any particular difficulty in the way.

How simple the main lines of the problem are I have shown as long ago as 1904 in an article contributed to "The Library," entitled "A Simple and Economical Plan for Founding a Cataloguing Bureau for Public Libraries."² I am going to use this article in the present address, and I shall make no apology for quoting from myself. It is my misfortune and not my fault if the article to which I refer remains the only really practical contribution to this question, so far as this country is concerned. In America the Library of Congress—to a still greater extent than was the case when the article was written—serves the purpose of a Cataloguing Bureau to the American Libraries. It is possible that with a Director at the British Museum in active sympathy with

²*The Library*, new series, v. 5 (April, 1904), pp. 146-157.

the needs of Public Libraries—as is Dr. Kenyon—and with possible development ahead in regard to the registration of copyright books, something might be done in the direction desired by the State; but such service would not, I think, be likely to be on the lines most suitable for Municipal Libraries. Without enlarging on this point, it is sufficient to say that a Cataloguing Bureau such as I have proposed, conducted by the Municipal Libraries themselves, would serve as the basis of other work, which would be perhaps of even greater value to Libraries than the actual cataloguing itself, and which it is pretty certain the State would never perform. I shall outline some of this work in a few moments.

Briefly my idea of the best way in which to establish a Central Cataloguing Bureau is this. I estimate that the total cost of the Bureau would be from £2,500 to £3,000 a year. In the article in "The Library" the annual cost is estimated at £2,500; but it would perhaps be safer to put it at a round £3,000 in the first instance. I do not propose to trouble you now with the details of the way in which this sum is arrived at. You will find these details set out and discussed in the article, to which I venture to refer those of you who are sufficiently interested. I assume that the Bureau buys all the books it catalogues, and I calculate these at something like 3,000 in number annually, which includes American and foreign publications. The Bureau would print its catalogue entries both on cards and in slip form for pasting down. The entries would be annotated, and would, of course, bear the class marks of the principal schemes of classification, as well as suggested dictionary headings, after the fashion of the cards issued by the Library of Congress.

The pivot of the whole scheme, however, is the proposal that the sum needed annually for the upkeep of the Bureau should be raised by a subscription of the libraries, based not immediately upon, though it would bear indirectly a rough ratio to, the number of cards and slips required by each subscribing library, but upon the size and financial resources of the library. To quote from the article "... if this were the precise basis of subscription, Leek would pay annually to the upkeep of the Bureau £1 5s. 0d.; Penge would pay £4 2s. 7d.; Croydon £23 1s. 8d.; and Manchester, £150 11s. 5d." I go on to say: "If a minimum payment of, say, £2 were fixed, the larger libraries would, of course, pay less, and this probably would be the better and more equitable plan." The latter suggestion is undoubtedly the better and

fairer way of meeting the expenses, and assuming that there would be something like 500 subscribing libraries (I assume 400 in the article, but that was in 1904), the subscriptions might work out something like this:—

25	Libraries	paying	£20	per annum	would bring in	£500
50	"	"	£15	"	"	£750
75	"	"	£10	"	"	£750
150	"	"	£5	"	"	£750
200	"	"	£2	"	"	£400

500 libraries then

would bring in £3,150

Each of these libraries would draw on the Bureau for everything that it required in the shape of slips and cards. The sums payable for this unique service to any of the libraries concerned would be absolutely a bagatelle, Manchester or Liverpool for £25 a year obtaining printed cards and slips for all its current books, and the smallest public library obtaining this expert service and this printed material for £2. What do you suppose is the amount which is now spent upon the libraries collectively on this one item of current cataloguing?

One librarian, criticising the scheme at the time it was promulgated, suggested that it would be better to relate the subscription of each library to the cards or slips it ordered from the Bureau. But this is to destroy at a stroke the one feature of the scheme which removes at once the financial difficulties in the way of establishing a Bureau on a commercial basis. How are you to get the capital necessary for the starting of the Bureau; having surmounted this difficulty, how are you to ensure that the custom done by the Bureau will enable it to continue and to pay an interest on the capital put into it? The beauty—if the expression is permissible in such a connection—of relating the subscription to the actual financial needs of the Bureau, carefully calculated as these would be upon the ascertained requirements of the libraries concerned, is that your Bureau can start operations as soon as ever the libraries have adopted the scheme, and there are no legal difficulties whatever in the libraries subscribing to the Bureau any more than there are in the libraries subscribing at present to Publishing Societies. Everything is reduced on this plan to its simplest elements. At the same time there can be no possible question that once the Bureau was started, demands for its work would arise in many quarters, for which, of

course, it would charge, and thus either reduce the amounts which the libraries would be called on to pay, or better still, extend its activities into such fields as those of the cataloguing of sets of transactions, and so forth.

I have already pointed out that the mere cataloguing work of the Bureau would only be a part and not by any means necessarily the most valuable part of its whole work. It is not necessary to labour the obvious advantages of permanency, neatness, and clearness of the printed entry over the typed entry, but it would be worth while giving careful consideration to the question whether the universal adoption of printed entries would not enable a reduction to be made in the size of the present standard card. We know that the space taken up by the Card Catalogue is one of the most serious objections to its use in large libraries; this objection would be mitigated if a smaller card than the present standard card of 5-in. by 3-in. could be employed. This is by the way. The galley slips issued by the Bureau, containing the books of the month or week as the case might be, would afford a most convenient and economical way by which the Librarian might send his orders to the Bureau, merely marking in the margin the number of cards required against the entries of the books to be bought; a similar slip serving as his order to the bookseller; indeed the slip might serve for members of his Books Committee also, thus obviating the typing up of lists of suggested books, and giving, of course, far more and better information. The annotations would be in themselves worth more than the subscription to the Bureau, viewing them merely from the standpoint of the book selector and not considering their after-use to the reader. Reviews of books we all recognise as on the whole very unsatisfactory guides for book purchase. It is true that the publication of the "List of New Books" in the "Times Literary Supplement," and more recently the similar but bibliographically more valuable lists in "The Athenæum," have been a boon to all book buyers, and especially to librarians; but excellent as these lists are in many respects, neither the entries nor the annotations meet the exacting requirements of the catalogue or of scientific book selection. Certain items of information, all-important from the standpoint of the librarian, are rarely given at all. Take as an example the question of new editions. The word "Edition" and the word "Revision" are used in the loosest possible way, and it is often-times impossible for a librarian to tell

whether a "Revised" edition of a work is a revision in any real sense of the word at all. In all too many instances publishers are, it is to be feared intentionally, vague in this respect, and without a collation of the new edition with the old it is impossible to be sure that the new edition is sufficiently new to justify its purchase. On points of this kind the Bureau would give absolutely definite information, which might in many instances alone save a library more than its subscription.

The question of how far public libraries buy the same books, allowing, of course, for differences in extent of purchase due to the large differences in financial resources, is much more than of an academic interest, but it is a question upon which no actual facts are available. I have, however, supposed in my scheme that the Bureau obtains every book that any public library is in the least likely to buy. I asked a certain number of librarians a little while ago to send me lists of their purchases during a single year, in order that I might compare them, and present in this paper the results of such comparison. I have not been able to obtain the information I desired from more than two or three libraries, and the purchase list of these libraries time has not permitted me to compare. But Mr. Brown is of opinion that public libraries do not to any extent buy the same books, except in the department of Fiction. The deduction that if this be so, the libraries are not buying the best books, is no doubt justifiable, but with considerable qualification. Librarians are aware that there are very few, if any, "best books" in the ordinary acceptation of the term, and libraries might very easily differ to a considerable extent in their purchases without necessarily buying bad books or even books not in the front rank. There is, however, a consideration of importance of another kind suggested by this question. It is clear that if public libraries are to influence to any recognisable extent the book market, they must buy in the main the same publications. In that way the buying power of the libraries becomes concentrated, and in certain departments of the publishing market should be a factor which neither author nor publisher can afford to ignore. If, therefore, Mr. Brown is right, and no one is capable of forming an opinion more likely to be in accordance with the facts than he, and libraries are only coinciding in their purchases to a small extent, the influence of a Central Bureau, tending as it inevitably would to greater uniformity of selection, would make the libraries a stronger force than they are at

present in the book world. And it is highly desirable for many reasons that we should increase our influence in this way, and exercise some directing power, both with regard to what is published, and with regard to what ought to be published but is not. I will give an illustration of what I mean in both these cases. There is just now being issued a number of dictionaries dealing with particular writers. Presumably these dictionaries are intended to appeal in the main to libraries, as it is not likely that the private reader will buy this kind of book. Now, of course—a fact which librarians know better than most people—just as there are no “best” books, so there are few absolutely bad books, books that is to say which are worthless for every purpose, and this is particularly true in regard to a dictionary. There is, therefore, a strong temptation on the part of a library to buy books of this kind, however badly done they are. Several of the dictionaries to which I refer are hastily and badly compiled and written. The moment, however, an extremely limited field of this kind is occupied by any book, however bad, it is not likely that any better book will be published. I hold that in cases of this sort the public libraries should act together, and should definitely refuse to buy, until a book reaching a sufficiently good level of achievement is produced. The Bureau (which I have omitted to mention, would be conducted by a Committee elected by the subscribing libraries), would notify libraries in some way of books which they are recommended *not* to buy under any circumstances. In respect to what is not published but ought to be, the Bureau might well take notice, and from time to time publish, lists of subjects upon which either no books exist at all, or upon which no satisfactory books exist. This alone would be a service of great value not only to the libraries and the public, but to authors and publishers also. It is one of the features of the publishing market that the same topics are dealt with *ad nauseam*, one or two books being written in a comparatively new field, then a whole host of writers piling quite unnecessarily book upon book on the same theme. Hence—to mention a very conspicuous example—the recent run on Gardening books. What a host of imitators Mrs. Earle’s “Pot-Pourri from a Surrey Garden” has called forth. If instead of this unnecessary duplication writers and publishers were to ask themselves what books are really required, the results would be better from the point of view of production, and infinitely better from the point of view of consumption. Every librarian could mention off hand many

subjects of intrinsic interest and value on which nothing exists of any moment. I had a striking instance of gaps of this sort brought to my notice only the other day, when I found that the coasting shipping trade of this country, which has always been large, and which has, in the size of the ships engaged, developed tremendously within the last few years, is absolutely without its book, and information on the subject is very difficult to procure. By compiling lists of such untreated subjects the Bureau would almost certainly ensure the publication of books dealing with them.

We have had at the Library Association several papers and several discussions about Book Selection. The subject is of great importance, it affects our work vitally, but we have not got very far with it. I submit that the work of the Bureau is absolutely essential if we are to have anything approximating to what I referred to just now as scientific book selection. The fundamental principle of book selection has I believe never yet been laid down in any of the papers dealing with this subject. And yet it is a very obvious and very simple principle; it is that the selection shall be based upon actual examination of the books themselves. To some extent this is done, but in the vast majority of libraries examination of the books before selection is not practicable. This applies more particularly to the expensive books, where examination is of most moment. In the Bureau you would have this work done probably by a Committee of librarians, but in addition, it is a part of my scheme, that the Bureau should classify and exhibit all the books it catalogues in a room specially set apart for that purpose. It would not keep the books beyond perhaps a year, when it would sell them; unless indeed, the idea of a Central Reference Storage Library of valuable books, which could be borrowed by public libraries, were developed out of the Bureau. This suggestion illustrates the many possibilities for development which the establishment of a Central Cataloguing Bureau would open out. But the library of classified new books, open to the consultation and examination of any librarian or member of a library committee visiting London, would be of immense benefit. It might be opened to non-members of the Bureau by payment of a small fee, or better still perhaps, the publishers might be induced to give the books in return for their free exhibition to the general public.

I am anxious that the suggestions which I have put before you should be fully discussed by you, and with that idea I refrain from dealing in this paper with other forms—

which exist—of library waste. Seers I believe, whether of the type of Messrs. Bellamy and Wells, or psychics, claiming literally to see what shall come to pass, differ a good deal as to the characteristics that will distinguish the civilisation which is to come. But it appears to me pretty evident that its dominant characteristic will be an enormous extension and development of the best and widest kind of co-operation. Let public libraries be in the vanguard of this movement, the initiatory stages of which are already beginning to overlap with the era of competition. It is to you, who hold in your hands the destinies of the public library during the next half century or so, that the idea of co-operation should appeal with special force. There is nothing in the way of co-operation—whether in the direction dealt with in this paper or in some other direction, except the lack of will to co-operate. The public libraries of the country have the same aim, are animated by the same spirit, are doing the same great work. But they are doing it as more or less independent units, and as such, overlapping in several ways, in no way more overlapping than in the fields of cataloguing and classification. The present position in this regard is incredible to us. If the librarians are ready with a sensible and practicable scheme of cataloguing co-operation, I believe there will be no insuperable difficulty in obtaining the support of the library authorities themselves. By such action we are not of course creating an absolute saving; that is not the idea; we are liberating energy and time and money which is uselessly spent in one direction, and freeing them where they might be profitably expended in other directions. We have none too much of any of these commodities: let us conserve and make the most effective application of what we have.

[In the discussion which followed the reading of the paper, Mr. HENRY BOND (St. Pancras) said that the subject of co-operation had been a prominent one for years, but he thought that it would be difficult to get library authorities to subscribe to the establishment of a Bureau as outlined by Mr. Jast, because of their dislike to paying in advance for anything which was not tangible. It was a pity that figures had been unobtainable as to similarity in book buying, because if the buying differed to any great extent, there was something to be said against a Central Bureau. He believed that libraries bought from 25 to 30 per cent. of the same books. He was quite sure that much time and expense would be saved if Mr. Jast's scheme could be realised. Mr. F. E. SANDRY (East Ham) thought it would be difficult to get 400 libraries to agree to buy the same books, and so make co-operation practicable. As to the exhibition of the books in London, provincial members of the Bureau would be at a disadvantage, since not many of them would be able to take the journey for the purpose. Mr. W. B. THORNE (Poplar) was particularly struck by the fact that so little notice had been taken of Mr. Jast's article, and that so little progress had been made since 1904. It was a pity

that more libraries had not replied to the queries, but it might be, as in one case of which he knew, that the particulars were difficult to obtain, and would even yet be forthcoming. He questioned whether the number of books suggested to be dealt with (3,000) would be enough, and felt sure that the scheme would have to be made compulsory before being largely taken up. The discussion was continued by Mr. H. R. PETERS (Lewisham), THE PRESIDENT (Mr. W. C. BERWICK SAYERS), who thought that the objection of library authorities to the scheme on the ground of its intangibility seemed to be at the bottom of all the opposition, but could easily be overcome by a business man finding £3,000 to start it going; Mr. H. G. HAYNE (Hornsey), Mr. R. COOPER (Battersea) who urged that library assistants would lose the valuable training afforded by cataloguing and classification; and the CHAIRMAN who thought that although as far as University libraries were concerned the Bureau would not have so much appeal, they must buy the same books to a certain extent, and would be able to make some use of it. In replying Mr. Jast said that Mr. Sayers's suggestion of a capitalist to finance the scheme cut away the whole fabric of his scheme. The practicability of it lay in its being undertaken and supported by the libraries themselves. He was glad to have had the subject brought to the notice of and discussed by library assistants, because to them was given the opportunity of realising it.]

SOME STEPS TOWARDS A MORE PERFECT ORGANIZATION OF THE LIBRARY PROFESSION.*

By HENRY T. COUTTS, of the Islington Public Libraries.

Librarianship, rightly interpreted, involves learning and science, and therefore may lay claim to a place among the learned professions. It can hardly be said that librarianship generally has yet earned this distinguished position, and even if one takes a very optimistic view, it is certain that it is not recognised universally. A great obstacle in the path of librarianship is the lack of recognition, by the public generally and by local authorities in particular, of the profession as an organized body. The old idea that anyone, irrespective of general education and special training, can be a librarian, is not yet eradicated. This want of recognition on the part of the public is largely due to the fact that our professional machinery is still very inadequate.

In the teaching profession, which is in many respects akin to our own, there is a recognised procedure for entering the profession, and a course of instruction and examination through which one *must* pass before attaining to a position of any importance. In our own profession the procedure for entering is dependent upon the notions and whims of local councils, and the educational requirements are governed by the same indefinite standards, although there is a course of instruction through which one *may*

*Presidential Address delivered on the occasion of the Seventeenth Annual Meeting at University College, London, on Wednesday, June 12th, 1912.

pass before attaining to a position of importance. During the past three years, in which I held office as secretary of this Association, I have received many letters from aspirants to librarianship asking for information as to the qualifications required and the steps to be taken in order to obtain posts as assistants in public libraries. Imagine the difficulty experienced in replying to such letters.

In a certain borough applicants for junior assistantships must be between seventeen and twenty years of age, and must state whether or not they possess certificates of the Oxford or Cambridge Local Examinations, the College of Preceptors, or other recognised examining bodies. If not, they are required to undergo an elementary examination in arithmetic, geography, English history, and English literature before they can become eligible for posts. Senior assistants must possess, in addition, a working experience of library administration, and not less than three certificates of the Library Association. At the neighbouring town applicants for positions in the public library are not required to possess any particular educational qualifications, and preference is given to candidates possessing local influence. And, needless to say, at both places the salaries paid are not excessive. The instances quoted are not exaggerated, and they show very clearly that a need exists for a more perfect professional organisation with power to influence public opinion and so bring about a more uniform and satisfactory state of affairs. Such an organisation should be able to minimise, if not to prevent altogether, the appointment of untrained persons as librarians.

There is a great need of more uniformity in the profession, a uniformity more in accordance with that which exists in the teaching profession. The similarity between the two callings, however, disappears when the subject of administration is considered. Local schools are managed by local authorities, but such authorities are subject to the Board of Education, and in this way a system of co-ordination is set up. In a paper read before this Association in November last, Mr. J. E. G. de Montmorency suggested that as the public library was part of the national education machinery, it should be under the control of the Board of Education. Ponder this suggestion. Would our professional status be improved if libraries were placed under the education authority? I think not. Rather am I inclined to agree with the view expressed by Mr. R. A. Peddie, thus: "We are just beginning to organize the library profession, and if

there is any chance of the library system being swallowed up by another, a larger one, where will our chance of organization come in? . . . We are a bigger thing than a branch of education, and unless we preserve our individuality we are lost." We must, therefore, turn to our existing organization, and consider how this may be strengthened and improved.

In the first place there are the professional societies which may be enumerated, thus: (1) The Library Association (the incorporated body of the profession); (2) The Library Assistants' Association; (3) Kindred Societies. The aim of these societies is to unite librarians and assistant librarians in bonds of common interest, and to promote the professional, educational, and social well-being of their members. The Library Association has further systematized the profession by providing technical instruction and periodical examinations, by issuing certificates to those who have satisfied the examiners, and by inaugurating a scheme of registration. These efforts are far from being perfect, but they form important steps to professional organization. The fact that there are in this country several societies possessing separate constitutions, having the same or similar aims, and making little or no advance towards amalgamation or federation, is an obvious sign of weakness in general organization. Admittedly the pivot of professional organization should be the incorporated body of the profession. In an ideal system of organization every society associated with the library movement would be affiliated or federated with the Library Association. At the present time, however, I should hesitate before proposing such a course to this Association. Until the Library Association adopts more progressive methods it cannot, in my opinion, appeal very strongly to the younger generation of librarians.

We have to thank the Library Association for the establishment of a scheme of professional education. These educational facilities, if taken advantage of, will be a potent factor in the elimination of the untrained librarian. But before we can expect local authorities to recognise the value of the certificates of the Library Association there must be a fuller recognition of their value within the profession. Several years ago there was much discussion about the policy of the "open door." The only effective way of closing this door is by educating librarians, generally and technically. The right type of assistant librarian may resent unfair outside competition, but he never fears it,

because he knows that by educating himself efficiently he should be able to meet his outside competitors in a more than equal contest. I affirm this notwithstanding those instances that have occurred recently in which unqualified men have been appointed to librarianships. As our organisation grows more perfect such instances will be fewer. One has only to review the past to be convinced of this fact. But so long as many assistants refuse to take advantage of the educational facilities offered, so long will professional education be retarded, and so long will an important step towards a more perfect organization be hindered.

Before proceeding to the purely domestic aspect of the subject, let me say a word or two about the scheme of registration inaugurated recently by the Library Association. The object of this scheme is to form a reliable register of qualified librarians, but many years must elapse before its purpose can be fulfilled. Its present value is minimised by the fact that there are some librarians classified as Fellows who are inferior in educational attainments to some assistant librarians classified as Members. This incongruous position, we are informed, is inevitable at the beginning of any such scheme of registration, and I cannot do better than refer you to the views on this subject expressed by the Honorary Secretary of the Library Association in an address entitled "The Library Outlook," which is printed in the February issue of *The Library Assistant*. When the register is closed in 1914, and when the criterion for election to Fellowship is the holding of the diploma of the Library Association, a very important step in the organization of the library profession will have been taken.

In conclusion let us consider, as an association of assistant librarians, our position and responsibilities with regard to professional organization. The present system leaves much to be desired, but it would be unjust to lay all the blame for its shortcomings at the door of the Library Association. Reform, like charity, should begin at home. The membership of our Association is growing steadily, but when we reckon the number of assistants engaged in library work throughout the country, we are faced with the unpleasant fact that the large majority are seemingly indifferent to the value of mutual help and the claims of organization.

You will notice a paragraph in the Annual Report stating that a committee was appointed by the Council to

consider ways and means whereby the membership of the Association might be increased. As a result of the work of this Committee, those assistant librarians who have not attached themselves to the L.A.A. will be acquainted with its objects and work. Their attention will be drawn to the fact that by attaching themselves to the Association they will have the knowledge that they are further strengthening the hands of an already strong society which, given increasing support, might perform much more for the benefit of its members.

In order to cater adequately for the provincial districts we need more Branch Associations. As you are aware, Branches have been established in Ireland, South Wales, Yorkshire, and the Midland and North-Eastern counties. The assistant librarians of the South Coast have resolved to form a Branch and to apply to the Council for a constitution. In the Glasgow, Liverpool and Manchester districts there are kindred associations doing excellent work in their respective localities. We are united to them in the spirit, though not in the letter. To them I would say: "Come over and help us;" we are working with the same objects in view; we not only desire your sympathy, we need your active co-operation and support; throw in your lot with ours, and thus bring the profession a step nearer to efficient organization.

PROCEEDINGS.

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING.

"To the House of Lords!" This brief instruction to the driver of the taxi into which some of us had crowded to escape from the rain that was pleased to fall in a deluge on the 12th June, may be regarded as a sort of "open sesame" to the Seventeenth Annual Meeting of the Association. The Association has visited many interesting places during its existence, but surely no more exalted meeting place could be found than in the home of the Mother of Parliaments, where, by the kindness of Mr. Edmund Gosse, over forty members gathered to inspect the Library of the House of Lords. It was a privilege never before extended to an association, and was most thoroughly appreciated by all who were able to be present. Mr. Edmund Gosse was, unfortunately for us, absent on the Continent, but the party was most courteously received by his deputy, Mr. Hugh Butler. The Library occupies four rooms overlooking the terrace and the river, every window commanding a magnificent view. The rooms, sumptuously furnished, and with book-cases covering the walls to the lofty decorated ceilings, were open to us, and we eagerly inspected the special things of interest to be found there, chief of which is the original death warrant of King Charles I.

Mr. Butler then conducted the party through some of the ceremonial rooms, the Royal robing room, etc., into the House of Lords itself. From there we went for a brief chat on to the Terrace, and thence were conducted back to the lobby. "Are these ladies accompanied by their Members?"

"No." "Then I must ask them to leave. The House is now sitting, and ladies are not allowed here." With this delicate hint from a man in blue, we were brought to the realization that our visit was over, and dispersed to our several ways until we were to meet again at five o'clock.

MEETING AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.

Tea was tastefully served in the Hall of University College, Gower Street, W.C., when the members assembled there at five o'clock in response to the kind invitation of Dr. T. GREGORY FOSTER. Afterwards, while the ballot was being counted, there was an opportunity to inspect the College Library, and the members were conducted into the different rooms by the Librarian, Dr. R. W. CHAMBERS, and his staff.

At 6 o'clock Dr. Chambers took the Chair in the Mocatta Library to preside over a gathering of about fifty, while Mr. L. STANLEY JAST, Honorary Secretary of the Library Association, read the paper on "Waste in the Library Field" which appears on p. 142, followed by a resumé of the discussion. A vote of thanks to him was moved by the Honorary Secretary (Mr. H. T. Coutts), seconded by Mr. Hogg (Battersea), and carried unanimously. The President (Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers) then moved, and Miss O. E. Clarke (Islington) seconded a vote of thanks to the Chairman, to Dr. Gregory Foster, the Provost of the College, and to the Staff, all of whom had contributed towards the hospitality of our reception.

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING.

After Dr. Chambers had retired, the PRESIDENT (Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers) at 7.30 p.m. took the chair, and after the reading of the minutes of the previous Annual Meeting, cordially welcomed the presence of Mr. Wyndham Morgan, of Cardiff. He then moved the adoption of the Seventeenth Annual Report. With this evening he concluded the third year of his presidency, and he was glad to be able to lay down that office in circumstances of the happiest augury for the work of the Association. The Annual Report was the most comprehensive, and in general, the most satisfactory yet issued. It recorded an increasing membership, a number of well defined achievements, and a continuance of successful and useful activities. The Second International School, held at Paris, proved that the modern assistant had not only large ideas but had enterprise. The meetings had been admirable, except that he regretted the small part associates took in the debates; this he hoped would be remedied in the coming session. The branches continued their excellent work. The difficulties of the Irish Branch were unfortunate, but circumstances in Ireland differed much from those in which British assistants were situated. It was encouraging that the South Coast assistants had applied, that very day, for a new branch; and this he hoped was only the prelude to the establishment of branches in other well-populated areas. The policy of the Association had been described in the three terms conservative, radical, and revolutionary. It was difficult to pursue any plan which would be regarded as well-balanced by every member or onlooker. It was certain, however, that effective work was being done. The addressing of library authorities by such methods as the Special Report, by letters of remonstrance when unjust conditions obtained in the advertisements of appointments, and by a public press campaign had not brought about the ruin of the Association as some had predicted, but had produced in some cases, the objects aimed at. But the Association was not growing as its just claims warranted. A Ways and Means Committee was working at this problem, and he urged his hearers to do their utmost to extend the membership, and with it the effectiveness of the Association.

The HON. SECRETARY (Mr. H. T. Coutts) seconded, and after a discussion in which Messrs. Sandry (East Ham), Tessier (Walthamstow), the Hon. Editor, J. D. Young (Greenwich), Wyndham Morgan (Cardiff), and C. H. R. Peach (Gray's Inn) who said that in the report he had noticed that only the

names of public library assistants had been mentioned; he should like to see steps taken to get more non public library men to join, and more time set aside for the discussion of the work familiar to them; took part, was carried unanimously and with enthusiasm.

RESULT OF THE BALLOT.

The Honorary Secretary then announced the result of the Ballot as follows:—

President:

Henry T. Coutts, Islington.

Vice-President:

H. W. Checketts, Birmingham.

Honorary Treasurer:

W. Geo. Chambers, Plumstead, Woolwich.

Honorary Secretary:

W. C. Berwick Sayers, Croydon.

Fellows:

R. A. Peddie, St. Bride Institute	156
Hugh Smith, Bishopgate Institute	134

Not Elected:

W. Ewart Owen, Leamington	100
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London Representatives:

W. B. Thorne, Poplar	...	179
Miss O. E. Clarke, Islington	...	166
J. D. Stewart, Islington	...	164
G. R. Bolton, Stoke Newington	...	152
J. D. Young, Greenwich	...	133
J. F. Hogg, Battersea	...	119
W. H. Parker, Hackney	...	114
Miss M. Gilbert, Fulham	...	110
D. S. Young, Chelsea	...	106
A. G. Hawkins, Fulham	...	104

Non-London Representatives:

H. R. Purnell, Croydon	...	184
G. W. Strother, Leeds	...	155
E. Male, Brighton	...	150
H. G. Sureties, Hornsey	...	142
W. Morgan, Cardiff	...	137
J. Ross, Liverpool	...	135
T. Coulson, Belfast	...	133
J. C. Handby, Bradford	...	128
H. Grindle, Birmingham	...	117
W. Wilson, Darlington	...	114

Not Elected:

C. H. R. Peach, Grey's Inn	...	96
R. F. Dallen, Poplar	...	95
H. R. Peters, Lewisham	...	94
R. Cooper, Battersea	...	89
A. M. Moslin, Stepney	...	58

H. Steele, Leyton	...	88
H. Woodbine, Birmingham	...	85
H. G. Hayne, Hornsey	...	77

Wm. R. Bridge
B. Crook
George E. Denne
C. Spencer

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MR. R. WRIGHT (Royal Societies' Club) moved and MR. W. H. PARKER (Hackney) seconded a vote of thanks to the retiring Officers and Council.

The President said: I declare these Officers and Council duly and constitutionally elected. Before I leave the chair I should like to say that we welcome several new members to office. I can assure them that the office of Councillor is a worthy one—an honour to the person occupying it. It is also a working office, and I promise them that no merely ornamental member is tolerated on the Council. I may be allowed to thank those members whom you have not returned, for their past services on the Council; at least three of them were valuable and devoted workers, for whose help the Association is a better body. And now I will ask our new President to take the chair; he has passed through an excellent training for his office; he is a man whom we all

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admire and respect, both for his personal worth and for his achievements as a librarian. I can only thank you warmly for your courtesy to myself, a courtesy which I may assure Mr. Coutts—in welcoming him to office and in wishing him a happy and successful year—you will certainly extend to him.

The New President (Mr. Henry T. Coutts) on taking the Chair, was greeted with applause. The speech with which he addressed the Meeting is printed on page 151.

Mr. J. F. Hogg (Battersea) rose to move "That Rule 5 (Officers) be amended by the addition of the following clause: 'The retiring President shall not be eligible for re-election to the Presidency, until two years after the expiry of his term of office.'" He said that during the seventeen years of the Association's existence, there had only been eight Presidents, not counting one who only held office for a few months. He thought that there were enough members to supply a fresh man to occupy the Presidential Chair each year. He did not wish the motion to be regarded in any way as a slight to the gentleman who had so ably held the Office for three years, but thought that the Association was tending to become Conservative and wished more opportunity for members to attain the Presidency. A negative motion by Mr. C. H. R. Peach to prevent discussion was over-ruled and Mr. W. G. Hawkins (Fulham) although not supporting it, seconded the motion in order that it might be discussed. Messrs. Young (Greenwich), Morgan (Cardiff), Sandry (East Ham) all spoke in opposition. Mr. Sayers said it was a matter very unpleasant for him to speak upon, but it was the duty of an officer of experience to have a definite view upon it. It was that the duties of the Presidency were not to be learned in one year, and if the motion were carried, it would mean that when a man became effective he would be removed. In any body only a few men could lend, and this motion seemed especially designed to eliminate the best man as rapidly as possible. It made the Presidency nominal and ineffective. The motion was negatived by 39 votes to 3.

The announcement that an invitation had been extended to the Association to hold the inaugural meeting of the new session at Stationers' Hall, concluded the Meeting.

LIBRARY ASSISTANTS' ASSOCIATION.

Meeting at Brighton to discuss the formation of a New Branch for the South Coast.

At the inaugural meeting of the 1911-12 session of the Library Assistants' Association held in Brighton Public Library in October last, a paper was read by Mr. Ernest Male on the "Provincial Assistant and the Library Assistants' Association," in which he advocated the formation of more branches of the Library Assistants' Association in the provinces. As an outcome of his suggestion, a meeting was held at the Brighton Public Library on 29th May to discuss the advisability of forming a South Coast Branch. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Henry D. Roberts (Director of the Brighton Public Library, Museums, and Fine Art Galleries), and there were present Mr. E. Male (Sub-Librarian, Brighton), Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers (President, L.A.A.), Miss Clarke and Mr. H. T. Coutts, of Islington, and assistants and librarians from Brighton, Worthing, Hove and Hastings. Before the meeting, the company were entertained to tea by Mr. Roberts.

The Chairman, in his opening remarks, briefly explained the object of the meeting, and thought that the proposed branch would be of great value to the assistants concerned. He had been interested in the L.A.A. from its formation, and had watched its growth with great satisfaction. He hoped that a South Coast Branch would be formed that evening. The Chairman then called upon Miss E. Gerard (Sub-Librarian, Worthing) to read a paper on "Librarianship from a Woman Assistant's Point of View." A

good discussion followed, most of those present taking part in it. At this point Mr. Roberts had to leave on account of another engagement and Mr. Hardcastle kindly took his place. Before leaving, Mr. Roberts was accorded a hearty vote of thanks for his hospitality and for presiding over the meeting thus far. Mr. A. Cecil Piper, Brighton, followed with a paper on "Library Advertising Methods," which also led to a discussion.

The discussion over, the chief business before the meeting was ably dealt with by Mr. Ernest Male (Sub-Librarian, Brighton), who moved the following resolution: "That this meeting of assistant librarians of the South Coast resolves to form a branch of the Library Assistants' Association, and to make application for constitution as a branch forthwith." Mr. Male then went on to explain the objects the Branch hoped to achieve. He said that the South Coast Branch was intended to include all assistants in libraries situated between Hastings and Portsmouth. He specially pointed out that it was not intended to hold all the meetings at Brighton, but hoped that each library would be visited in turn. He thought, too, that at the meetings of the Library Assistants' Association there were too many papers on technical subjects read, and he hoped that a special feature of the new Branch would be the introduction of papers on purely literary subjects, as a sound knowledge of literature, he pointed out, was a very necessary part of a librarian's equipment. Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers (President, Library Assistants' Association), seconded, and in his remarks gave some very helpful advice in matters of detail, and thought that as there seemed plenty of enthusiasm behind the venture, the new Branch ought to be a very active one, although it would probably never have a very large number of members. The resolution, after having been freely discussed, was then put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

The following officers were then elected:—Hon. President: Mr. Henry D. Roberts; Chairman: Mr. Ernest Male; Hon. Secretary: Mr. A. Cecil Piper; Hon. Treasurer: Miss E. Gerard. Committee: Miss Barnwell (Worthing); Mr. W. Law (Brighton); Mr. H. Mew (Hove); Mr. B. R. Moors (Portsmouth); Miss E. Young (Brighton). At the suggestion of Mr. A. Webb (Brighton), it was decided that the librarians of Eastbourne, Hastings, Hove, Portsmouth and Worthing should be appointed Hon. Vice-Presidents.

Miss M. Frost (Librarian, Worthing), moved that a cordial vote of thanks be accorded to the readers of the papers, which was seconded by Miss O. E. Clarke (Islington). It is hoped that the first meeting of the South Coast Branch will be held some time during October.

MIDLAND BRANCH: ANNUAL OPEN MEETING.

The above meeting was held at Worcester on May 23rd. A small but enthusiastic party of members and friends was met at Shrub Hill Station, Worcester, by Mr. J. H. Gibbons, of the Worcester Public Library, and proceeded first to the Victoria Institute, which houses the Library, Natural History Museum and Art Gallery. After inspecting the excellent Museum and the Art Gallery, the party adjourned to a restaurant for tea, and then proceeded to the Cathedral, where they were met by the Rev. Canon Wilson. Canon Wilson proved a most delightful guide, and first conducted the party to the Cathedral Library, where, with many instructive and interesting explanatory remarks, he showed them some of the more important MSS. and early printed books which this old monastic library possesses. The magnificent interior of the Cathedral itself was next inspected, when Canon Wilson treated the party to a most interesting discourse on the evolution of architecture as illustrated by the many different styles of which the Cathedral contains examples. The beautiful sculptured tomb of Prince Arthur, brother of Henry VIII., was examined and many more old MSS. and other relics were

inspected. Finally, Canon Wilson conducted the party to his garden, from which a splendid view of the magnificent Cathedral Tower was obtained.

A motor launch awaited the party, which then proceeded up the Severn to Camp Weir. On the return from this enjoyable trip, the Victoria Institute was again visited, and a brief inspection of the open-access lending library made under the guidance of Mr. Thomas Duckworth, the Chief Librarian. At the short business meeting which followed, hearty votes of thanks to Canon Wilson for his kindness in showing the party over the Cathedral, Mr. J. H. Gibbons for his very active assistance in arranging the meeting, and Mr. Thomas Duckworth for kindly showing the party round the Library, were passed. A resolution conveying to Mr. W. Ewart Owen, until recently Hon. Sec. of the Branch, best wishes for his success in his new appointment and the heartiest thanks of the Branch for his very valuable services as Hon. Secretary, was carried unanimously.

The Chairman announced that Mr. F. J. Patrick had been nominated for the vacant secretaryship of the Branch. In the absence of any further nominations, Mr. Patrick was declared elected. A resolution was passed strongly protesting against the action of the Douglas Town Council in appointing an untrained candidate as public librarian. With this the proceedings terminated, bringing to a close a memorable half-day. It is only to be regretted that more members were unable to be present to take part in the proceedings.

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION COUNCIL: ELECTION.

At a recent Meeting of the L.A.A. Council, Messrs. JAMES D. STEWART (Islington) and W. C. BERWICK SAYERS (Croydon) were nominated as candidates for the Library Association Council in the interests of assistant librarians. It is hoped that every member of the L.A. in our ranks will accord these gentlemen their support, and will do what they can to secure their election.

APPOINTMENTS AND CHANGES.

BAKER, DR. E. A., has resigned the Chief Librarianship of the Woolwich Public Libraries.

BIFFEN, MR. N. W., Sub-Librarian-in-Charge, St. George's Library, has been appointed Sub-Librarian-in-Charge, Limehouse Library.

*BOLTON, MR. G. R. who was among the selected candidates for the Librarianship of the Darlington Public Library, did not receive the letter addressed to him by the Town Clerk asking him to appear.

MADAN, MR. FALCONER, M.A., Sub-Librarian of the Bodleian Library, has been appointed Bodley's Librarian.

*MOSLIN, MR. A. M., Chief Assistant Mile End Library, has been appointed Sub-Librarian-in-Charge, St. George's Library.

POWELL, MR. WALTER, Sub-Librarian of the Birmingham Public Libraries, has been appointed Chief Librarian.

THOMAS, MISS GLADYS, has been appointed Librarian of the Penarth Public Library.

*TWORT, MR. H. A., Senior Assistant in the Croydon Central Reference Library, has been appointed Librarian to the Workers' Educational Association, Toynbee Hall, London, E.C.

WEARE, MR. WILLIAM, Sub-Librarian-in-Charge, Limehouse Public Library, has accepted an appointment in the office of the Rate Collector to the Stepney Borough Council.

* Member L.A.A.

SUPPLEMENT TO
"THE LIBRARY ASSISTANT,"
September, 1912.



Photo by J. H. Killick.

399, Holloway Road, N.

HENRY T. COUTTS,

President of the Library Assistants' Association, 1912-13

Honorary Secretary, 1909-12.